

Prologue.

By Mr. Otway to his Play call'd *Venice preserv'd*, or the *Plot discover'd*. Acted at his Royal Highness the Duke of
TORK & THE ATHER, the 9th of February, 1681.

IN these Unsettled Times, when each Man dreads,
The Bloody Stratagems of Buify Heads;
When we have fear'd three years we know not what,
Till Witnesses began to dye or th' Rot;
What makes our Poet meddle with a Plot?
Was't that he fancy'd for the very sake,
And name of Plot, his trifling Play might take?
For there's not in't one Inch-board Evidence,
But 'tis he says, to Reason plain, and Sence;
And that he thinks a plentiful Defence.
Were Truth and Sence by Reason to be Try'd,
Sure all our Swearers might be laid aside.
No, of such Tools our Author has no need;
To make his Plot, or make his Play succeed.
He of Black-Bills has no prodigious Tales,
Or Spanish-Pilgrims throw'n a Shore in Wales.
Here's not one Murder'd-Magistrate at least,
Kept Rank like Venison, for a City Feast;
Grown four days fitt, the better to prepare,
And fit his pliant Ribs, to Ride in Chain:
He has no Truths of such a Monstrous Stature,
And some believe there are none such in Nature.
But here's an Army rais'd, tho' under Ground;
Yet no Man seen, nor one Commission found!
Here is a Traitor too, that's very old,
Turbulent, Subtle, Mischievous and bold;
Bloody, Revengful, and to Crown his Part;
Loves Fumbling with a Wench, with all his heart.
And after having many Changes past,
Thanks Heav'n, for all his Age, he's hang'd at last.
Next, there's a Senator that keeps a Whore;
In Venice none a greater Office bore.
To Lewdness every night, the Letcher ran,
Show me all London, such another Man;
Match him at Mother-Creswells if you can.
Oh Poland! Poland! had it been thy Lot,
T' have heard in time of this Venetian-Plot;
Thou surely chosen hadst, one King from thence,
And honour'd them, as thou hast England since.

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THe Text is done, and now for Application,
And when that's done, pray give your Approbation.
Tho the Conspiracy's prevented here,
Methinks I see another hatching there.

And there's a certain Faction feign would sway,
If they had strength enough to dam this Play;
But this the Author bad him boldly say,
If any take his plainness in ill part,
He's glad on't, from the bottom of his heart,
Poets in honour of the Truth should write,
With the same Courage, brave Men for it Fight.
And tho against him cables hatred rise,
And daily where he goes of late he spies
The Scoules of fullen and Revengeful Eyes,
'Tis what he knows with much contempt to bear,
And serves a Cause too good to let him fear.
He fears no Poison from an incens'd Drab,
No Ruffians Five-foot Smock, nor Raskal's Stabb,
Nor any other Snares of Mischief laid,
Not a Rose-Ally, Coldel, Ambuscade,
From any private Cause, where Malice Reigns;
A general sign all Blackheads have no Brains.
Nothing doth Damn his Pen, when Truth doth call,
No not the Picture-Mangle of Guild-Hall;
The Rebel-Treue of which, that Vermin's one,
Have now set forward, and their Course begun,
And whil'ft that Brutes Figure they deface,
As they before had Massacred his Fame,
Durst their base Feats, but look him in the Face,
They'd use his Person, as he use'd his Fame,
A Face in which, such Lineaments they dread,
Of that great Martyrs, whose rich Blood they shed,
That their Rebels Hate they still retain,
And in his Son would Murder him again,
With Indignation then, let each brave Heart,
Rouse and unite, to take his injur'd part,
Till Royal Love and Goodness call him home,
And Songs of Triumph meet him as he come,
Till Heav'n his Honour, and our Peace Restore,
And Villains never wrong his Varrue more.

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